Defense Collaboration Between India And America

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Abstract
The history of Indo-America relations indicates a very limited military integration. The first stage of defense cooperation commenced with the Kickleightes proposals in 1991—which of officially began the process of opening up of the two armed forces. However, defense cooperation picked up momentum after India tested its nuclear devices in 1998 and both countries reconciled to the emerging realities, after the change of guard at Capitol Hill in 2001. The basis of tremendous progress in the bilateral defense relationship is the recognition in both the government of a convergence of strategic interests of the two countries. Mainly the strategic interests of India in Asia are: (a) security in its immediate neighborhood, and (b) protection of Indian interests (which includes economic and energy needs) in the extended neighborhood i.e. the rest of Asia and the Middle East.

Keywords: Indo-America Relations, defense cooperation, democratic traditions, Factors Impacting

1 Introduction
The two countries India and America whose democratic traditions and rule of law stand as an Inspiration to millions of people in the world had closer and intimate contact between them much before India’s independence. During World War II, the United States and India were drawn closer and their problems economic and political were discussed and settled through the British embassy in Washington and the American embassy in London. A new era of Indo-US Cordiality and reciprocation in the international affairs began with the greetings from President Harry S. Truman to the Indians on the occasion of India’s independence on August 15, 1947. The first American tour of Jawaharlal Nehru in October-November 1949 gave further impetus to strengthen the existing Indo-US relations. Direct Indian-American relations began in an atmosphere of mutual sympathy.

India-America difference arose over both the U.K. – U.S. draft resolution of February 21, 1951 and the revised resolution adopted by the Security Council on March 30, 1951. The United States realized the strategic importance of Pakistan and Kashmir more after the Berlin blockade, the formation of NATO, the victory of communist China in 1949, the Korean crisis in 1950 and the end of U.S. Monopoly of the atomic bomb. These major developments had intensified the cold war and
strengthened the strategic importance of Kashmir in the US eyes and the U.S. instantly started to use its pressure on India impatiently.\(^1\) Indo-America relations reached low ebb during the September 1965 Indo-Pak war. Pakistan used American military aid against India and when India complained there was no satisfactory answers from the U.S. Government instead it again equated India and Pakistan and did not condemn Pakistan as an aggressor.\(^2\) However, American arms aid to India continued in complete disregard of alarmed protest from Pakistan, until Pakistan’s attempt to gain Kashmir by force set off the three-week war in 1965. Then American arms aid was cut off, and India turned to the Soviet Union for military assistance.\(^7\)

Tensions between the United States and India reached their heights because of the Nixon Administration’s ‘tilt’ in favour of Pakistan during the Indo-Pakistani war of December 1971. After this war, the problem of Kashmir and the release of the prisoners of war remained unresolved when Indira Gandhi and Bhutto conferred at Shimla from June 28, till July 3, 1972.\(^9\) to resolve the Kashmir problem makes it clear that India is not going to accept the solution of the Kashmir problem beyond her national interest and prestige. The United States or any other country cannot force a settlement of the dispute which is not acceptable to India.

In the new context of the post-cold war dynamics, Kashmir issue got further complicated when Pakistan linked the Kashmir issue with the nuclear question and launched a proxy war by funding, training and equipping the anti-Indian militant groups in Kashmir. Islamabad sought direct American Intervention in resolving the Kashmir issue arguing that its nuclear weapons programme could be abandoned if only the Kashmir issue could be resolved satisfactorily.\(^3\) The Clinton Administration, that had put forward nuclear proliferation as one of the priority foreign policy issues, and declared a policy of “cap, freeze and roll back” of the South Asia nuclear programmes, found the effort to link Kashmir with the Nuclear issue quite useful. Thus, when Pakistan proposed a South Asian Nuclear Weapon Zone, the US promptly endorsed it much to the Chagrin of India.\(^4\) The bilateral defense cooperation picked up momentum with the ‘kick-lighter proposals’ in 1992 that were aimed at reversal of the negative trend in the bilateral defense rations in the previous years. This was followed by the signing of the ‘Agreed minutes on Defense Relations’ between the two governments in January 1995. Yet these efforts did not lead to any significant warming in relations that was still haunted by mutual mistrust leading to concerns within both countries about ulterior motives relative’s gains and degrees of reciprocity.\(^5\)

Further the Indian nuclear tests of May 1998 soured New Delhi’s relationship with Washington and India was subjected to a sanctions regime. Immediate after the nuclear tests, the administration of President Bill Clinton sought to put in place standards of policy for India and Pakistan as well, which also tested six nuclear weapons in 1998, that included measures like signing and ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, halting production of fissile material for weapons, observe strategic restraint, particularly to stop flight-testing ballistic missiles, establishing stringent export control as well as a closer dialogue between the two countries. However none of these could materials by the end of Clinton’s term. The limited utility of sanctions to coax India to abandon

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\(^3\) Tanvir Sultan, *op.cit.*, p. 59

\(^4\) Ved. Vati Chaturshreni, *op.cit.*, p. 203
nuclear weapons of realized in the higher echelons in the United States government. At the same time both the governments searched for ways to break the impasse. In 1999, the senate voted to reject US ratification of the comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which weakened the US policy approach to India on that issue and synchronously also provided impetus on both sides for a serious dialogue between high level leaders.6

Ironically, 1998 tests hastened a genuine strategic dialogue between New Delhi and Washington. In this dialogue, then Deputy Secretary of State Stroke Talbott represented the US and then Indian external Affairs minister Jaswant Singh represented India. Talbott and Singh met 14 times in seven countries in an effort to resolve the extent bilateral differences over India’s nuclear weapons programme and develop the means to manage those differences that could not be resolved. The Talbott-Singh dialogue constituted what was at the time the most prolonged engagement between high-level American and Indian officials in their bilateral history. These meetings laid the foundation for the on-going evolution in US-India-strategic relations7.

Relations during George W.Bush Regime

While Clinton and Vajpayee made tremendous progress in changing the structure and substance of the America-India relationship, Clinton’s commitment to global non-proliferation norms precluded elemental changes during his presidency. In contrast to Clinton, President George W.Bush’s administration prioritized getting the Indo-US relationship right and unhindered by the non-proliferation commitments of past presidencies, Bush embraced a new paradigm for relating to the major power in South Asia. Unlike post administrations that pursued policies towards India or Pakistan with an implicit calculations as to how the other would respond under Bush the US sought to decouple its relations with India and Pakistan, in a progress that has become known as ‘de-hyphened’ in New Delhi, Islamabad and Washington.8

Since early 2001, relations between India and the US have expanded both in terms of the Kinds of engagements pursued and in terms of the depth of those engagements. They have made great strides in the areas of military to military engagement, civilian space and nuclear cooperation, and in high technology exchanges and collaboration. Furthermore, while these areas have advanced faster than what the most optimistic observers had surmised possible, both countries have assembled a number of private sector ventures that have created important stakeholders with vested interests in the relationship. These bilateral efforts have been buttressed and even galvanized by the financially well-off and numerically strong. Indo-American Community9

From the very beginning of its tenure the administration of President George W.Bush took a different approach to security relations with India owing in large part to geo strategically significant location of India for the post 9/11 US-led war on terror. Added to this, the enthusiastic support for the war on terrorism offered by the Vajpayee government in 2001, led to the waiver, by executive order of President Bush, nuclear related sanctions on both India and Pakistan. The lifting of sanctions resulted in the 2001 witnessed the revival of the defence policy group dead since 1998 nuclear tests that now meets annually. Time to time, the US officials including the former secretary of

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7 Surya Narayan Yadav.  India-America Strategic Partnership : experiences and expections, Global Vision Publishing House, New Delhi, 2No, p. 75
8 R.S.Yadav, “Paradigm Shift in Indo-US Relations : Problems and Prospects.” In India’s Foreign Policy.
9 K.R.Gupta India’s International Relations, Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, 2009, p. 72
Defence Donald Rumsfeld have been acknowledging the importance of the bilateral defence to defence relationship. The escort patrols for American ships through the Malacca Straits in support of operation Enduring freedom by the Indian Naval ships Sukanya and Sharda took place in June and July 2002, while September and October that year witnessed the largest ever America-India naval exercise, called ‘Malabar’. In October 2002, again in Agra, an air transport exercise named ‘copes India-02’ developed a baseline for future interoperability and fighter aircraft exchange. Since then there have been joint military exercises on a regular basis. 

A peacekeeping command post exercise was held jointly in New Delhi in April 2003 and Special Forces of the two countries conducted joint counter insurgency exercises “Vajra Prahar” in Mizoram in April 2003. A counter insurgency and Jungle Warfare exercise “Yudha Abhyas” was held in Mizoram in March-April, 2004. “Cope Thunder” multilateral exercises hold in Alaska in July-August 2004 had Indian air force units including 200 personnel and six Jaguar fighters. About 2,000 Indian and US, Navy personnel took part in “Malabar 04” a training exercise off the Southwood Coast of India on October 1-9, 2004. A major IAF-USAF dissimilar air combat training exercise “Cope India 2005” took place at Air Force Station Kalaipkunda on 7-17 November 2005. The USAF participation comprised twelve F-16, based at Misawa Air Base, Japan, and one E-3 AWACS based at Kadema Air Base, Okinawa. IAF Participation comprised MIG-21 Bison, Mig-27, Mirage-2000, Mig-29 and Su-30K. Besides, few sorties Su-30 MKI were included for the first time.

January 2004, the two countries signed the Next steps in strategic partnership (NSSP) initiative that called for greater bilateral cooperation and easing of restrictions by the US in the areas of dual use high technology goods (also those with military applications) civilian nuclear cooperation, civilian space cooperation and stepping up dialogue on missile defence. The US export of dual use materials to India has been increasing since 2001 the current approval rate of license applications being above 90%. The commercial military sales jumped from 5-6 million in 2003 to $64 million in 2005. In March 2005, the United States announced that it would offer India co-production rights for both the F-16 and F-18E/F to complete the requirement, while offering Pakistan the option to purchase F-16 and F-18E/F to complete the requirement, while offering Pakistan the option to purchase F-16s in March 2005. In June 2005, the United States and India signed the landmark agreement called the “New Framework for the US-India Defence Relationship”, a 10 year defence cooperation pact envisaging wide range of joint activities, including multi-national operations in their common interest, collaboration to promote security and defeat terrorism and enhancement of capabilities to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The pace of defence cooperation has substantively increased since then. The most recent exercise of the Malabar series took place in September 2007 in the Bay of Bengal for the first time, as well as expanded to include Japan, Singapore and Australia, and involved 27 worships. The exercises extended up to the Strait of Malacca, The busiest waterway of the world thought, China was skeptical of the military overtones of the exercises.

Apart from the joint exercises and exchanges of officials, arms sale and procurement of military equipment forms a substantive part of bilateral economic relations with military trade playing

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12 Ibid. p. 76
a significant role in the trade between the two countries. The purchase of 12 Thales Ray them systems AN/TPQ-37 Fire finder artillery locating Rader, 40 general Electric F404-GE-F2JE engines for India’s Indigenously designed light combat (LCA), deep submersible rescue vessel systems and spares for seeking helicopters have been among the major deals finalized with the US. Further a deal worth $1.059 billion was clinched between the two countries for the sale of six Lockheed Martin C130 J Herecules transport aircraft to India in May 2007. On June 22, 2007, the Indian Navy commissioned USS Trenton an amphibious transport ship, its first warship acquired from the US, as IMS Jalashwa, in a deal worth $ 44 million. The Indian government is also desirous of warfare system, PAC-3 anti-missile systems and combat aircrafts. Also the largest US military firms, Lockheed Martin and Boeing Co. are competing with Russia and European rivals to supply India with 126 multi-role fighters, a deal valued at $10 to $12 billion for which India invited tenders in August 2007. Apart from these two, Northrop Grumman Corp, General Dynamics Corp and Raytheon Co. the three next largest US military contractors have also expressed their intent to tap into attractive Indian markets.

The goals of Indo-US defense cooperation, as identified by the framework agreement, are shaped by larger concerns rather than any threat from a single country. They include, defeating terrorism and violent religious extremism”, prevention the spread of weapons of mass destruction,” and “protecting the free flow of commerce via land, air and sea planes.” These objectives are widely shared in the international community and in Asia. India’s own growing defence and novel cooperation with other Asian countries are also premised on the same interests. Thus, India and America have also agreed to collaborate on multinational military operations “When it is in their common interest” and on missile defense, which has emerged as the new locus of advocated military technologies.

Factors Impacting on Indo-America Defense Relations

* **Pakistan** - The complex dynamics characterizing the Indo-Pak relationship create a minefield of issues that potentially could stall or undermine the Indo-US military relationship. In the view of a key US depart of Defense planner, Pakistan will make or break Indo-US relationship. Both India and America see an economically viable and stable Pakistan, the removal of all extremist elements in Pakistan, an end to cross border terrorism and an establishment of democratic institutions in Pakistan. Both the countries agree that these three objectives in central and South Asia. They fear a collapsing and unstable Pakistan could pose a serious security risk for the region such as cascading instability, increased threat from Islamic Fundamentalists and insecure nuclear weapons. Post 9/11 and war in Afghanistan, Pakistan has received arms and frontline status as major Non-NATO frontier status as Major Non-NATO ALLY (MNNAO). All this adds to its security guarantee and the same is at the cost of India’s security interests. Further, from India’s point of view, the US pressure on Pakistan to dismantle terrorist camps and Jehadi groups, that fawn terrorism in J&K has been less than satisfactory. After the visit of Dr. Manmohan Singh to the US in July 2005, the US has claimed that its relations with India are ‘dehyphenated’ from Pakistan. Nevertheless, the US requirement of Pakistan as an ally in fighting the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in the tactical and short term will impact on Indo-US relationship.

* **China** - India and America recognize China as an emerging power. However, India’s views its relationship with India as being driven primarily by growing economic ties that benefit both countries
and a desire to continue to move the border dispute forward. China plays an integral role in India’s foreign policy objective of keeping its options in a multipolar world and avoiding any relationships that may constrain those strategic options. On balance, India looks to a more constructive possibly of working towards a “Virtuous cycle” in which India, China and US should maintain cordial relations with one-another.38 Prime minister Mamohan Singh Visited China in January 2008. The talks were reported to have been held in an atmosphere of sincerity, with and friendship and were described as ‘constructive and forward looking’ resulting in the singing of a grand –sounding, document tilted a shared vision for 21st Century.

* UN Security Council Seat: The rise of India on the global stage is no longer a question but the answer. The United States has realized that if indeed it wants to stay as the pre-eminent player in Asia, it must stop treating India as part of the problem. It must shed old inhibitions, adopt new attitudes and forge ahead with India because it is in America’s Interests to do-so. Gazing at the crystal-ball of tomorrow’s geo-politics with concrete present day realities in mind, the Bush Administration has signaled initial support for India’s aspirations. The United States would like to push widespread reforms within the United Nations and not just its expansion.13The first Bush Administration revived the United Nations because of its conception of a new international order in which the United States as the sole remaining super power and the hegemony of the international system, saw the UN as the organization which could work to establish international peace and security. The second Bush administration lost interest the UN was unable, or unwilling, to fulfill the role that US wanted it to play for its foreign policy.

* Terrorism - India’ differences with the US are not without a solid ground. In the matter of dealing with terrorism, in particular, New Delhi, has enough reasons to questions America sincerity. Much before the fateful September 11, 2001 terrorist strikes, India had been warning the world about the dangers of this evil, which believes that no boundaries and is a crime against humanity. India believes that even after the 9/11, the America anti-terrorist comparing is marred with contradictions for instance, Washington sees Pakistan as a reliable partner in the fight against terrorism as theAmerica official argue that we are working very closely with the government of Pakistan to neutralize the influence of Al-Qaeda and Taliban, remnants in the region India’s stand had seen that given the fact that Pakistan had been instrumental in the creation of Taliban; its sincerity about helping America efforts to remove the remnants of the terrorist outfit cannot be trAmericaticed. In addition to the above factors, these Included devils of the nuclear fuel for Tarapur Atomic power station. India has not signed the NPT and had refused to accept its safeguards. Growing military presence of unified states in the Indian ocean and India’s demand for dismantling of the United states base in ‘Diagorica’ and its return to Mauritius, India’ strong advocacy of NIEG, the restructuring of international monetary institutions, the presence of feeling in India that the United states was trying to disrupt its unity and stability by encouraging agitators in Assam, Punjab, Kashmir were same a the issues which affects and strained the above irritations, the leader of the two countries should keepers to improve

relations. So, we can safely say that Indo-America relations are bound to change for better in future period. India has lost no time in taking steps to adjust the relationship with United States of the realities of the post cold war era firmly established Indo-US relationship would scale new heights and acquire new dimensions. There is ample scope for co-operation in no-conventional areas for a mature relationship between the India and the America.

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